

had hearings, they fail to acknowledge that Democrats have held hearings for more of President Bush's circuit court nominees, 20, than in any of the 6½ years in which the Republicans controlled the Committee before the change in majority last summer. This is more nominees than received hearings in either of the first 2 years of the Clinton administration when the White House and the Senate were controlled by the same party. The fact that Democrats have treated this Republican President just as fairly as Democrats treated a President of their own party with regard to hearings for circuit court nominees is remarkable. Republicans have utterly failed to acknowledge this fairness. The myth of Democratic obstruction of judicial nominees fits the partisan Republican political strategy better than the truth.

The years of Republican inaction on a number of circuit court vacancies has made it possible for Democrats to have several "firsts" in addressing judicial vacancies. For example, we held the first hearing for a nominee to the Sixth Circuit in almost 5 years, that is more than one full presidential term, and confirmed her, even though three of President Clinton's nominees to the Sixth Circuit never received a hearing or a vote. One of those Clinton nominees waited more than 1,500 days and never received a hearing or a vote, up or down, by the Committee.

We held the first hearing on a Fifth Circuit nominee in 7 years, including the entire period of Republican control of the Senate, and confirmed her last year, while three of President Clinton's Fifth Circuit nominees never received hearings or votes on their nominations. We also held the first hearing on a Tenth Circuit nominee in 6 years, and we have confirmed two of President Bush's nominees to the Tenth Circuit, while two of President Clinton's nominees to that circuit never received hearings or votes.

With last night's confirmation of Judge Gardner, the 12th judicial nominee from Pennsylvania to be confirmed in just 15 months, in addition to the other 79 judicial nominees confirmed in this short period, the Democratic-led Senate has had a record-breaking year of progress and fairness in the judicial confirmation process.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about hate crimes legislation I introduced with Senator KENNEDY in March of last year. The Local Law Enforcement Act of 2001 would add new categories to current hate crimes legislation sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred December 10, 2000 in Jacksonville, FL. Three white men, all 20 years old, assaulted a black man.

The victim was walking down the street when the three allegedly said, "There's one, let's get him" before running toward him. The assailants, who sources say met at a white supremacist rally, knocked the victim to the ground, then punched and kicked him.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 is now a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the actions taken by the administration to create a viable international regime that stops trade in conflict diamonds, and I encourage the administration to increase their efforts to further expand this regime so it attains an effective and comprehensive level of coordination, certification, monitoring, and enforcement.

The Kimberley process has its origins in a decision by African countries to end trade in diamonds that fuel regional conflict but sustain trade in diamonds that create economic stability. This effort has been supported by a number of countries, non-governmental organizations, and the diamond industry. In March 2002, the principals concluded their last full session, and it is now the responsibility of the countries involved in this process to enact implementing legislation.

A number of Senators and I are currently engaged in discussions with the administration as to what this legislation would look like and what an appropriate vehicle for the legislation would be. I would like the legislation to be more expansive than the administration wants at this time, and I would like the legislation to directly address the problems related to certification and accountability mentioned in a recent GAO report. But that said, I believe the administration is negotiating in good faith, and that they want the same outcome in the end that I do. Thus I fully expect that we will find common ground for action in the next few days. I also fully expect that discussions will continue so we can find appropriate remedies on all the outstanding issues.

I traveled to Africa in August, and I know from my briefings there that trade in conflict diamonds is a despicable practice that must end. It is incredibly disturbing and sad that one of the most promising means to attain real economic growth and political stability in certain areas of Africa—the natural wealth represented by diamonds and the diamond industry—has instead become a deadly tool by which rebel movements can purchase weapons, maim and massacre civilians, destroy communities, overthrow governments, and perpetuate uncertainty. Of equal significance, there is increasing and incontrovertible evidence that

funds from the illicit trade in conflict diamonds are being used by Al-Qaeda to finance terrorism. The problem of conflict diamonds must be confronted, it must be confronted now, and it must be confronted in a way that ends both the brutal violence that is pervasive in Africa and the possibility that conflict diamonds may fund terrorist activities in countries around the world.

In my view, it is incumbent on the United States to play an active and prominent role in creating a framework that ends trade in conflict diamonds. In my view, it is incumbent upon Congress to work with the administration to ensure that this effort occurs. I believe the Kimberley process should move more rapidly toward its stated goals and the more robust goals outlined by the United Nations. But I also understand that multilateral action will be essential for this regime to work, and that multilateral agreements take time to arrange. I am willing to be patient, but only with the understanding that people are dying in Africa at this time and we must help them soon. More delay means more suffering, and we all have to be cognizant of that as we contemplate solutions.

Thus I think it is essential to state on the floor of the Senate today that I stand solidly behind the ongoing effort to end trade in conflict diamonds, and I encourage the administration to continue its effort to create a strong international regime that will engender political stability and economic growth in Africa. I am ready to work intensively with my colleagues and the administration to this end.

I yield the floor.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF 4-H

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of 4-H in America. For 100 years in our great Nation, and since 1911 in New Mexico, 4-H has molded generations of involved citizens and leaders, providing an enduring contribution to the development of America's youth.

This organization, rooted in hands on learning, grew from the interest of seven boys from Doña Ana County in each planting a pound of seed corn they acquired from the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, now New Mexico State University. This 1911 experiment was the first of a growing number of activities of this kind in rural communities around the territory that led to the establishment of precursor 4-H clubs in schools, led by teachers. Local merchants, bankers and farmers began the organization's long history of community support by donating prize money, goods and expertise to the young peoples' activities. The 1912 State fair saw the first ever competition between 4-H club members, who earned premiums for prize-winning corn, kafir corn, milo, peanuts, bread and sewing.

Today, New Mexico 4-H boasts more than 50,000 members, part of the 6.4